

COLLEGE NIGHT SCORES AND JUDGES' COMMENTS

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A lovely day to love Montevallo

By LILY DICKINSON and MAGGIE SANDERSON



Montevallo locals sell Love Montevallo Day t-shirts on Main Street.

On March 3, the City of Montevallo held Love Montevallo Day, a celebration of the town's hometown charm, and in recognition of its bicentennial anniversary, through the patronage of Main Street's small businesses and parks.

The events kicked off at 11 a.m. with a dedication of Streetscape in memory of former Montevallo mayor, the Honorable Ben McCrory. Streetscape is the mainstreet revitalization program which is helping to make Main Street Montevallo ADA compliant in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Transportation.

Following this was the dedication of two of the pocket parks in Montevallo. Owl's Cove Park is a grassy little area that Montevallo students should recognize as the area in front of UMOM. The oth-

er park dedication of the day was the new Bicentennial Park, located in front of Main St. Tavern, dedicated to the memory of Junnie Craig, Dr. Earl Cunningham and attorney Mitchell Spears.

Businesses and citizens alike flocked to Main Street, creating an atmosphere of excitement befitting the special day. Mark Lollar of The Great American Hot Dog Stand set up his cart outside of UMOM, the porch decked out in hand-drawn signs professing a love of the town. Tables were set up along the street selling a variety of shirts declaring a love for Montevallo and a warm recognition for the beloved and classic Main Street in America.

Attendees of Love Montevallo Day also got to appreciate the newest additions that have come

over the last few months. Shiny new traffic lights and lamps now line the street, bringing a new, but old-fashioned style to Main Street. There were also little banners hanging on the lamps along the road, declaring phrases such as "Art" and "Nature," as well as other qualities that describe Montevallo and make it the quirky, special town that it is. A beautiful new clock was present for residents to admire, in preparation for its placement in front of Bicentennial Park.

Many vendors sold Main Street-centric merchandise such as magnets, postcards, towels and t-shirts. Art made by the famed Tim Tingle, tree carver of Orr Park, was also being sold.

"Mugs and Kisses Shopping on Main," encouraged people to go

to local stores like Happy Dollar, Emma Gray and Lucky Penny Boutique to check out special deals of the day. Bradford Real Estate also sold merchandise, in celebration of Montevallo, such as Main Street t-shirts and local artists' work.

"I think it's wonderful," said Patricia Honeycutt, 64, a lifelong Montevallo resident, who was selling magnets, cards and shirts, "and I couldn't think of a better place to be. When my husband and I married, he lived in Sylacauga, and he wanted me to move down there, and I went, 'no, no, no, no, no!,' and now he loves it here. I think the Love Montevallo Day is great, let everyone come out and show their support, and really, what we have is special."

NEWS in BRIEF

By VANDY MYERS

President Trump recently announced plans to impose heavy tariffs on metal imported into the United States. The tariffs would place a 25% tax on imported steel and a 10% tax on aluminum. Opponents of the plan include both Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and the Speaker of the House Paul D. Ryan, R-Wis., according to the New York Times, citing the potential of the new taxes to start a trade war with countries such as Russia, China and others in Europe.

A Nor'easter, or a large tropical storm that focuses primarily on the East Coast of the United States, has been going on since Friday, causing damage from Maine to North Carolina. The Washington Post states that at least six people have been killed in accidents caused by the storm, and approximately 2 million people have lost power since it began. Several thousand flights have been canceled due to weather, and high tide was at an astonishing height of 14.67 feet, the third highest level since 1928.

Adélie penguins are the smallest type of penguin in the Antarctic and are found living in colonies all across the Antarctic Peninsula. In recent years, a decrease in local sea ice has killed off part of the krill population that these flightless birds feed on. Human interference by fishermen has also potentially been a factor in the decrease in number of these penguins. However, as reported by the Tribune Media Wire, a large colony of over one million undisturbed penguins was found through satellite imaging in a location where researchers had not previously looked. It is likely that the colony has been present since the 1950s, and consistently stable onwards.

UPC Space Escape a galactic good time

By LILY DICKINSON and MAGGIE SANDERSON



Participants had to bust a move for this robot to give them hints. Photo by Katie Compton.

Montevallo students had an out-of-this-world experience, on Feb.

27, in UPC's Space Escape room, put together on the second floor of Farmer. In groups up to twelve, students were led into a rocket ship complete with portholes, a space suit, a robot and, of course, a space hamster. With only 25 minutes on the clock, groups had to work quickly and collaboratively in an attempt to stop their ship

from crashing and meeting an untimely demise.

Immediately upon the entrance to the escape room, tensions began to run high as action music played in the dark room, the main source of light was a small disco ball that lit up in blues and greens.

The first task for the newly christened astronauts was to figure out how to activate "Hint Mode"

for the robot that stood intimidatingly in the corner of the room. For the first group of the day, things started out promisingly as a quick-thinking member of the group figured out that the arm-bands everyone was wearing held a critical clue.

Following this, the group dispersed around the room to discover clues. Another important moment was the discovery of an iPod that could read the QR codes on objects around the room. Other objects scattered throughout either helped the players, or deepened their confusion, as was true in the case of a cryptic notebook found in a backpack.

Students seemed to divide and conquer, many trying to piece together the codes from the QR reader, while others worked quickly to put a binder back together that held the dance moves required to activate the robot's hint mode.

Unfortunately, even hint mode wasn't enough to save the group; as they worked speedily to try and open a hidden safe, the timer ran out. Despite this, everyone had a lot of fun.

"I thought it was going to be pretty corny," said Shalamar

Smith, a sophomore, "but it actually was really fun! My group was cool, we all worked together. We didn't win, but it was still fun."

"My experience was very fun," said Freshman Djimon Eichelberger, agreeing with Smith, adding, "it got really hard and I kept thinking we were gonna die, and in the end you know, we died, but you know we did good!"

Both Smith and Eichelberger found the difficult hints and riddles to be one of the best parts.

"I solved the hardest quiz, nothing major," Eichelberger jokingly explained to a laughing audience of fellow group members, "but it was a good challenge for the brain, and I proved that I'm smarter than some people."

Smith specifically enjoyed performing a series of moves in front of the robot in an attempt to unlock hint mode also saying, "My favorite part was the hints, to do the moves in front of her, it was fun."

Even though the group ultimately didn't escape quickly enough to be saved, a good time and a sense of camaraderie was experienced by each and every participant.

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Review: "Rapture, Blister, Burn" met with lukewarm reception

By GEORDIE KENNEDY

Theatergoers on the weekend of Feb. 22 saw the Chi Box theater transformed into a close and intimate backdrop for the University of Montevallo Theater Department's production of "Rapture, Blister, Burn." Gina Gionfriddo's 2014 work was performed in a single, rustic inspired set using several arrangements of furniture.

"Rapture, Blister, Burn" follows the complex story of the cross section of suburban life, academia and the state of modern feminism. The story follows an unhappy couple Don, played by Isaac Webster, an unmotivated, pretentious pornography addict married to Gwen, played by Alana Angrisano, a downtrodden housewife with a half finished bachelor's degree and a recently kicked drinking habit.

The show begins its motion with the introduction of Catherine, played by Cadley Jackson, a long time friend of the couple and a previous flame of Don's. Catherine found academic success where

Don and Gwen had stagnated in order to start a family.

The course of the show not only follows the trio, but the lives of Avery, a college student living a young and free sort of lifestyle, played by Maggie Connick, and Alice, Catherine's ailing, old fashioned mother, played by Kassie Couch, whose health had brought Catherine back to New England in the first place.

Over the course of the play, the audience follows a small, informal class on feminism and feminine roles in pop culture taught by Catherine and attended solely by Gwen and Avery. The class not only serves to present the thematic ideas that make up the play, but also offers a backdrop for a quick and passionate affair between Catherine and Don.

Once the affair inevitably comes to light, Gwen and Catherine make a deal. The terms of the agreement involve them essentially switching lives, Gwen moves into

Catherine's New York apartment and Catherine stays in the suburbs with Don.

As the play itself unfolds, Gionfriddo's academic background becomes starkly clear. The content, while primarily focusing on the characters' particular situations, was laden with social theory and commentary. Despite making interesting points intellectually, the play often seemed to strain under its own intellectual weight.

The dialogue felt stilted at times, often coming across more like a lecture than a play. Scenes where this issue most immediately presented itself were focused on Catherine's class. More academic syntax would be appropriate in such scenes, but the sheer length and density of the material covered often took away from being a more direct commentary on the rest of the play, but tended to stand as its own lecture within the more dramatic content.

One such scene toward the

beginning of Act One went on for over half-an-hour on topics in historical feminism. While the subject matter was related to the underlying themes of the play, much of these themes could be left to the audience to infer instead of being thoroughly explained for a large portion of the act.

Overall, while "Rapture, Blister, Burn" contained thought provoking material as well as some touching themes, the actual content of the play often proved to be heavy handed nearly to the point of condescension to the audience.

Let it be known, however, that a good cast can make any script shine, and the students comprising the cast of "Rapture, Blister, Burn" took an otherwise flawed play to another level. Scenes plagued by the dryness of academic debate were lightened, esoteric concepts were given life, and an overall difficult and often cynical script was allowed to put its best foot forward.

Several complex character relationships were handled particularly well. The intensity between Don and Catherine was well mirrored by the growing animosity Alana Angrisano played through Gwen toward Catherine. Each actor contributed excellently to the palpable tension which pervaded a majority of the play's scenes.

By the end of the play, things return to the status quo. Gwen and Don decide to return to a mediocre marriage while Catherine and Avery strike out to New York together, renewed in their purpose.

While the play was, at points, lacking; attendees left with a wealth of academic material to digest and a bright and memorable performance on part of the University Theater Department.

Future looking bright for girls in STEM

By LAURA DEROCHE

March is Women's History Month, and one particular area of women's history is beginning to attract more attention: women's role in the development of science.

Currently, there's quite a bit of concern over how women's science history will look in the future. There's been a big push for women to pursue careers in science and technology. While it's certainly a good thing that these career choices are encouraged, there's always been quite a bit of room for improvement in making women feel like a scientific career is really where they belong.

One of the places where this problem has always been particularly prevalent is how science is portrayed in products and media marketed towards young children. The issue is evident with a look into any toy store -- chemistry sets, plastic dinosaurs and model rockets are largely confined to the blue aisles, while mermaids and princesses populate the pink ones.

While there's nothing keeping girls from owning science-inspired toys, the fact that there haven't always been science toys market-

ed specifically toward them can be alienating to some girls, and perpetuate the idea that a successful STEM career and femininity ought to be mutually exclusive.

"People have an expectation that all women who go into STEM fields are the 'Powerful, commanding, and strong woman' And if you're anything less than that, you get put under the 'air headed girl who needs extra help' category." Said Katy, age 14, "Science is presented to women and girls in a way that kind of makes us feel like we need extra help just because we're girls."

In previous years, girls' toys have had a distinct lack of scientific themes, and Claire, age 9, said that she was particularly frustrated by the expectation for girls to like certain activities or colors based solely on their gender. "It's annoying that labs and experiments for girls usually have girl colors. I like to make different kinds of slime, and they think because I am a girl I want pink slime, but I don't like pink. All girls do not like pink!"

When asked what kind of toy she'd like to see made one day,

Claire said, "I'd like a 3D printer that would make everything I needed for an experiment with one click. For example, I would look up an experiment on the internet, click a link and then the printer would make everything I needed."

Claire's tech-savvy concept may seem impossibly futuristic to those who remember having to choose between scientific toys and girls' toys, but recently, the selection of science products aimed at young girls has been rapidly improving.

American Girl's 2018 Girl of the Year doll, Luciana Vega, is an aspiring astronaut described as, "Creative and confident with a serious science streak!" Along with the doll's release, American Girl is partnering with Space Camp to create a camp itinerary based on Luciana's story, and has added science-based lessons and games to their website, alongside the more typical dress up games.

A number of children's books, including Rachel Ignotofsky's "Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers Who Changed the World" and Andrea Beaty's "Rosie

Revere, Engineer", have appeared in stores and on Amazon.com, where both books are marked as #1 Bestsellers. These are just a few examples of the STEM-related "girl power" products whose popularity is on the rise.

"I remember you were seen as a 'gutsy little girl' or a 'tomboy' if you wanted to do something that involved science when I was younger," said Katy. "Now I think women in the science field is presented as more normal to kids."

Claire said that her school encouraged everyone to learn about science together. "The labs are fun for everyone, and everyone participates," she said, "The girls get to do the same things as the boys."

Claire also stated that women's contributions to history shouldn't be limited to any one area. "The most important thing for girls to know is that girls can accomplish anything if they keep trying. Girls can make history in whatever subject they want."

**HAVE AN
OPINION?**

**EMAIL US AT
ALABAMIAN@
MONTEVALLO.EDU**

**The
Alabamian**

Farmer Hall,
Behind Post Office
Station 6222
Montevallo, AL 35115
alabamian@montevallo.edu

Editor-in-Chief

Geordie Kennedy

**Managing Editor of
Content**

Jamie Haas

Layout Editor

Laura DeRocher

Photography Editor

Katie Compton

Copy Editor

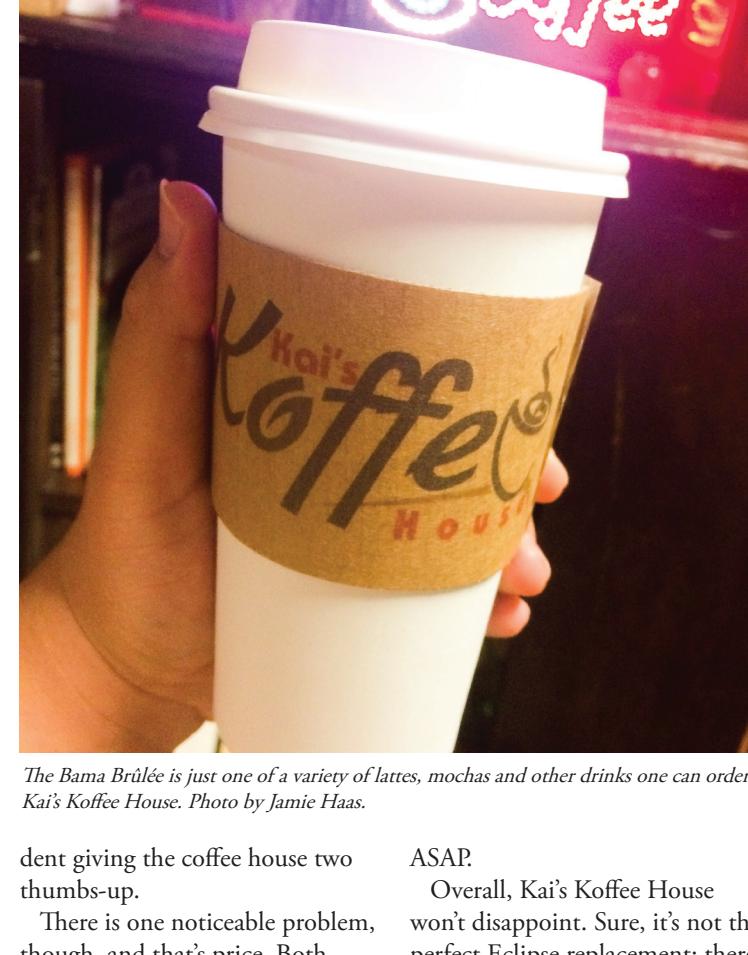
Waid Jones

Contributing writers

Vandy Myers
Lily Dickinson
Maggie Sanderson
Caleb Jones
Donovan Cleckley

Adviser

Tiffany Bunt



The Bama Brûlée is just one of a variety of lattes, mochas and other drinks one can order at Kai's Koffee House. Photo by Jamie Haas.

dent giving the coffee house two thumbs-up.

There is one noticeable problem, though, and that's price. Both online and in-store, the prices are nowhere to be found, which is pretty odd. I'm not sure if it's intentional or accidental, but if there's one suggestion I'd offer the cafe it's amending that situation

ASAP.

Overall, Kai's Koffee House won't disappoint. Sure, it's not the perfect Eclipse replacement; there's still the issues of distance and mystery prices. But if you're a coffee aficionado and willing to fill that latte-shaped hole in your heart by any beans necessary, I think Kai's is the way to go.

Review: Kai's Koffee House

By JAMIE HAAS

Ever since the tragic closing of Eclipse, the city of Montevallo has been sorely lacking a worthwhile go-to coffee spot. Sure, there are places you can go to get a quick fix like McDonald's, Jack's or Einstein's, but none offer that same charm and ambiance that a more one-of-a-kind establishment often does.

Enter Kai's Koffee House, the answer to our coffee-craving prayers. Well, sort of. The place has its ups and downs, but there are two things I'm sure of: the coffee is phenomenal and my visit left me with a latte on my mind.

I first came across Kai's Koffee House through a suggested post on my Instagram feed; the image had no caption, but the swanky drink pictured didn't need one to convince me that it was worth a try. I waited for the weekend and made a trip to the cafe.

This brings me to the first con of Kai's: it's not exactly a hop, skip and jump away from the University. The coffee house is located in Pelham, which, while not as out of the way as Birmingham, is still at least a 25 minute drive away. For some, the distance might be a dealbreaker, but I was willing to make the trek.

When I entered Kai's Koffee House, the first thing I noticed was its warm and inviting interior;

Montevallo students recognized at ACETA conference

By LILY DICKINSON

On Feb. 23 and 24, University of Montevallo students Maggie Sanderson and Donovan Cleckley travelled to Troy University to participate in the Association of College English Teachers of Alabama conference.

Sanderson, a sophomore, was there to receive an honorable mention for her essay "Meanwhile Back at the Ranch: Menippean Satire in The Crying of Lot 49," which had been entered for the Mary Evelyn McMillan Undergraduate Writing Award.

Donovan Cleckley, a junior, participated in the conference by presenting his paper, "Telling the Truth About My Own Experiences as a Body: Virginia Woolf as Both a Writer and a Survivor of Sexual Violence."

"The ACETA individuals who selected it most likely chose it because it focused on empathy and compassion toward women who have experienced sexual violence," Cleckley explained. "The theme of the conference was based on sym-

pathy and empathy as developed through reading literature."

While Cleckley submitted his paper and had it chosen by judges, Sanderson wrote her paper last fall in her English 203 class, taught by Dr. Beringer, who then submitted it for the award. "I was both pleasantly surprised to hear that he enjoyed the paper so much and that it had received an honorable mention from ACETA," Sanderson said.

Sanderson attended the conference on Friday to receive her prize.

"The conference was excitingly official and very much a wish-fulfilling experience. There, I got a check and a handshake, as well as my award being announced," Sanderson commented. "My two favorite parts were putting on my fancy laminated name-tag and the memories I made with my friend."

"I absolutely enjoyed attending the ACETA conference this year!" Cleckley said about his experience. "Presenting my paper was exciting because I love writing pieces that

relate to members of my audience and provide them with encouragement in their times of difficulty. Understanding survivors of sexual violence, for example, is just one case in which a paper can be both relatable and meaningful for people in an audience."

Along with this, Cleckley took pleasure in presenting his paper and hearing other attendees points of view. On this, he said: "In terms of presenting on sexual violence, I particularly enjoy hearing how my analyses related to members of the audience. For example, one person in the audience commented on how interesting it was that I critiqued the usage of passive voice regarding the retelling of sexual violence cases and how language does indeed affect the perception of such cases."

Congratulations to both Cleckley and Sanderson for their outstanding essays!



University students Donovan Cleckley and Maggie Sanderson pose at the ACETA conference. Photo by Lily Dickinson.

Businesses cut ties with NRA post Parkland school shooting

By CALEB JONES and WAID JONES

Many businesses have cut ties with the National Rifle Association in the wake of a school shooting that left 17 dead at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

Many of the High School's students and parents have reignited the discussion of gun control nationwide when they began expressing their views over social media and public events in Florida. These students have not only taken a stand against what they feel is lax gun control legislation, but have also questioned legislators who accept monetary donations from the NRA.

In a CNN town hall, Parkland high school students questioned Republican Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida regarding his connections with the organization.

"Can you tell me right now that you will not accept a single donation from the NRA in the future," Cameron Kasky, a junior, asked the senator.

Rubio refused to answer Kasky's question, attempting to divert the conversation to his stances on

gun control instead. According to federal campaign finance records, Rubio has received more than 3 million dollars from the organization over the course of his political career.

This town hall prompted nationwide discussion pertaining to the NRA's support of political candidates. Additionally, companies with members-only deal partnerships with the NRA were encouraged by customers and activists alike to sever ties with the organization or face a boycott of their business.

Businesses such as Enterprise Holdings Inc., Hertz Global Holding Inc., TrueCar Inc., Metlife Inc., Delta Air Lines Inc., United Airlines Inc., The Kroger Corporation, L.L. Bean, and Recreational Equipment Inc., as well as many others have already severed ties with the organization in wake of these threatened boycotts.

In related news, Dick's Sporting Goods, one of the leading sporting goods retailers in the United States, has also stated that

they will be ending the sale of assault-style rifles and high-capacity magazines in their stores, and will no longer be selling firearms to persons under the age of 21. The company will also discontinue sale of high-powered rifles, including AR-15s, at their stores nationwide.

Walmart has also raised the minimum age for purchasing a rifle to 21, and said in a statement that they will be discontinuing the sale of toys resembling assault-style rifles, including air guns as well.

Despite the stances these businesses have taken, the NRA and its supporters have made it very clear that they are unfazed.

The NRA asserts that their

members are not to blame for the atrocities that have sparked this debate. Instead, the organization attributes the Parkland shooting to "the failure of that school's security preparedness, the failure of America's mental health system, the failure of the National Instant Check System" and "the cruel failures of both federal and local

law enforcement."

They NRA recently said in a Tweet, "the loss of a discount will neither scare nor distract one single NRA member."

The Georgia state legislature recently passed a bill which removed a 50 million dollar tax break on jet fuel, which was targeted at Delta Airlines, who are headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, after the airline announced the discontinuing of a discount for NRA members.

"Businesses have every legal right to make their own decisions, but the Republican majority in our state legislature also has every right to govern by our principles," said Georgia's Lt. Governor Casey Cagle, in an interview on "Fox and Friends," regarding his state's lawmaker's reaction to Delta Airlines recent break from the NRA.

Recreational Equipment Inc., also known as REI, a popular outdoor equipment coop has gone one step further than other retailers and is currently examining its relationships with gun

manufacturers who also sell outdoor equipment in their stores.

"We believe that it is the job of companies that manufacture and sell guns and ammunition to work toward common sense solutions that prevent the type of violence that happened in Florida last month," REI said in a statement released after placing a hold on orders from brands owned by Vista Outdoor such as Bell and Camelback because Vista also owns Savage Arms, an American firearm company. "Companies are showing they can contribute if they are willing to lead. We encourage Vista to do just that."

As more companies discontinue their relationships with the NRA or impose restrictions on guns sold at their premises it will be telling how Federal and State Governments react, and with the 2018 midterm elections coming in November with Republican and Democratic primaries having already begun, gun control is likely to be an important issue on voters' minds as they head to the polls this year.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY: Barbie's Debut

By MAGGIE SANDERSON

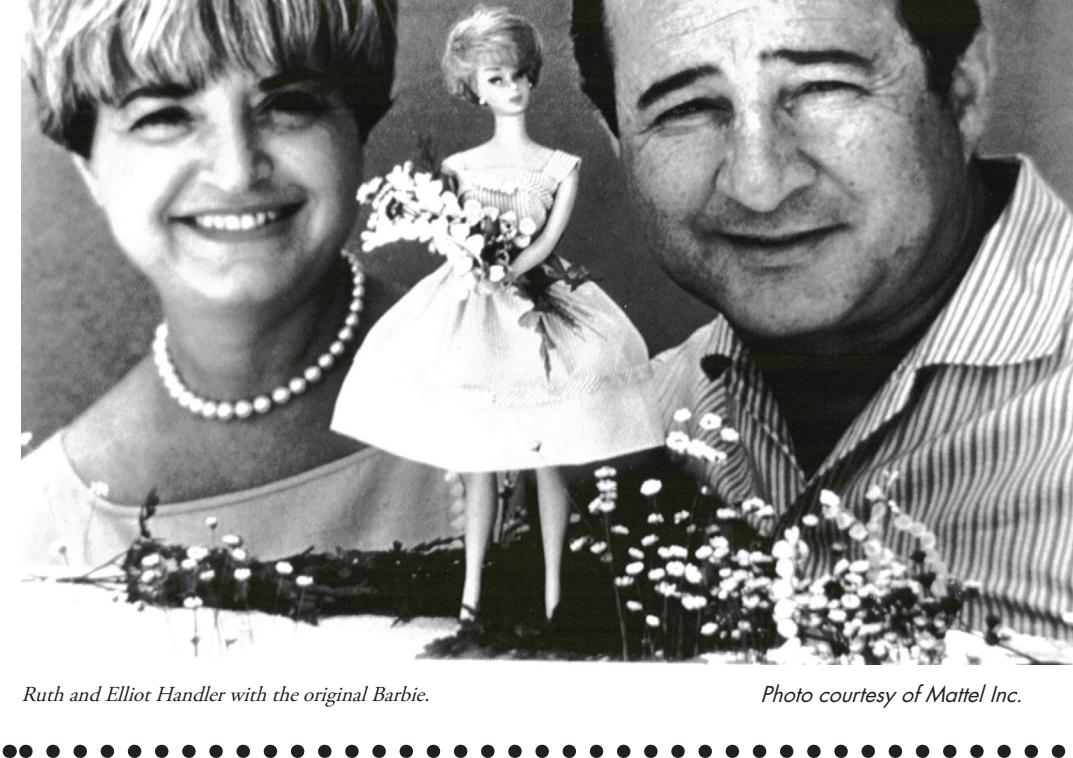
Mattel's Barbie doll debuted on March 9, 1959, at the American International Toy Fair in New York City. Barbie was the first doll mass-produced in the United States to have adult features.

Ruth Handler, co-founder of Mattel, came up with the idea after her daughter appeared bored playing with her baby dolls. After obtaining the rights to a German doll named "Lilli," and adapting her appearance, Handler named the new doll after her daughter, Barbara.

The extremely popular and often-controversial doll has held more than 130 jobs over the last 50 years including astronaut, surgeon and president of the United States.

This year, in honor of National Women's Day, Mattel has released new Barbie dolls featuring the likenesses of women like Frida Kahlo, Amelia Earhart and Katherine Johnson. By doing so, the company claims to be promoting good role models for young girls, with more of a focus on "empowering" professions.

Since her debut, more than 800 million dolls in the Barbie family have been sold, cementing Barbie's icon-status globally.



Ruth and Elliot Handler with the original Barbie.

Photo courtesy of Mattel Inc.

Barbie is sparking a global call to action by asking fans to tag and share the female role models that inspire them, using #MoreRoleModels.

Alumnus profile: Jeremy Black

By JAMIE HAAS

Scrolling through Facebook over the past week, there's one story almost every UM student has likely seen at least once: a one-in-a-million yellow cardinal was photographed in Alabaster, Alabama by Jeremy Black. However, not long before his rare portrait went viral, Black was a student at the University of Montevallo, staying up late to finish art projects and tripping on the bricks like the rest of us.

Black graduated with a Bachelor of Science in graphic design and photography in December 2016, and has since been putting his education to good use through numerous artistic ventures.

One such project, titled "Iridescent," involved Black photographing approximately 80 models, with faces covered in shimmering

glitter. Inspiration for the project stemmed from a similar shoot done on "America's Next Top Model." Black shared that he often draws inspiration from the reality show due to its utilization of differing mediums.

"I elaborate on a lot of their ideas and try to make them my own," said Black.

Black's true passion lies not in recreating zany television photoshoots, but in wildlife photography, a hobby he pursues as a volunteer and freelance photographer for the Birmingham Zoo and Alabama Wildlife Center, taking high resolution portraits of eagles, owls and falcons. Black giddily acknowledged the coincidental symbolism of being a former UM falcon using the skills he learned at

the University to take pictures of the mascot's namesake.

During Black's youth, nature was more than an inspiration, though; it was a sanctuary.

"I was bullied in middle and high school, and I endured it for about eight or nine years," said Black. "My escape from that was going to the zoo."

Because of how often he visited the menagerie, Black's mother gifted him a camera to better capture those memories. To her surprise, Black seemed to have a natural talent for the craft of photography.

"At that point I realized that it was something I might want to pursue, turn a negative into a positive," said Black.

Black's current goal is to open his own studio, eliminating the

irksome barriers the great outdoors sometimes pose to his art.

"A lot of the time I'm limited by weather conditions," said Black. "If it's 20 degrees outside and it's raining, people don't want to be photographed, especially when I get adventurous and want to throw some paint or run around in the woods."

Being adventurous with his art is something that appears to come naturally to Black, but, as always, his confidence did not come without trial.

"There were years I didn't want to be on camera, so I decided to be on the opposite side," said Black. "Now, I encourage people to express themselves. I notice that a lot of people tense up behind the camera, so I learned to use my

personality to make people feel more comfortable. Just throwing in a 'yaaas' or 'you slay' helps people loosen up."

Black's parting remarks were words of advice for anyone seeking to follow their dreams.

"Don't be afraid to be different," said Black. "That's the best thing someone can do, because you don't want to be like everyone else. Find something that sets you apart. Pursue what you love."

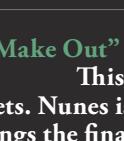
Black's work can be viewed at jeremyblack-photography.com and facebook.com/jeremy-blackphotography.



Pictured above is Kumar the Malayan Tiger from the Birmingham Zoo (2014), and an artistic close-up of photographer Jeremy Black.



Photos courtesy of Jeremy Black.



Spotify® PLAYLIST



SADIE HAWKINS

"Make Out" - Julia Nunes

This quirky tune is just about as forward as it gets. Nunes is far from shy about her intentions as she sings the final line of the chorus: "I'm trying to make you stay so we can make out."

"First Love/Late Spring" - Mitski

This song's distant, dreamy quality is perfect for its subject matter: a love that's still being contemplated, and still not quite familiar territory. When it comes to love and dating, we're so often told that confidence is key, but this track draws the spotlight to the beauty of vulnerability.

"Parachute (Acoustic)" - Ingrid Michaelson

For this pop number, Michaelson brings it back to basics with just vocals and a guitar. Make no mistake, though, this song is brilliant not in spite of its simplicity, but because of it.

"Take Me" - Aly & AJ

You might remember Aly & AJ from their Disney years, but they've recently made a comeback to the music scene; and, "Take Me" is the perfect hazy electro-pop anthem for the woman who knows exactly what (or who) she wants.

"Love Me Like You" - Little Mix

This track successfully pays homage to the doo-wop style of the 60's while maintaining Little Mix's signature modern sound. As is the norm with Little Mix, listeners will appreciate both the vocal quality of individual members and the group's tight harmonies.

"Jessie's Girl" - Mary Lambert

Some songs are performed by women and some songs are performed for women; Lambert's cover of the Springfield classic "Jessie's Girl" just so happens to be both.

"Biology" - Girls Aloud

This energetic track may have been released in 2005 but its vibrancy is no different now than it was then. It's hard to resist the urge to dance when Girls Aloud make their choruses so dang catchy.

"Everybody Wants to Love You" - Japanese Breakfast

Cute and catchy with a super fun guitar solo, this upbeat tune will be stuck in your head for days — and you'll love every second of it.

"Powerful" - Major Lazer, Ellie Goulding, Tarrus Riley

Okay, this one is a bit of a cheat song because it's not just Goulding on the track, but the duet is too good to leave out. From the compatibility of Goulding and Riley's vocals to intense lyrics, this song is truly "Powerful."

"Old Song" - Lady Gaga

With an upbeat and thoroughly sing-alongable chorus, this high-energy tune is perfect for playing in the car on a date. With a line like "we know that the night belongs solely to us," you know you're in for a good time.

"Partition" - Beyoncé

In case you forgot, Beyoncé is ready to remind you that a woman's love isn't always quiet and gentle; sometimes, it's sensual and powerful, and this critically acclaimed electro-R&B hit definitely captures that.

Coming out: from closet to closure

By DONOVAN CLECKLEY

As expected, college students experience struggles, whether small or large, in terms of academics and extracurricular activities. For closeted LGBT college students, these everyday struggles stack upon one paralyzing and terrifying challenge: coming out of the closet. Telling the truth of one's body is mountainous because the individual learns to speak the previously unspoken.

In "The Leaning Tower," Virginia Woolf writes, "If you do not tell the truth about yourself you cannot tell it about other people." While Woolf's quote addresses how 19th century writing, such as the writing of Dickens and Thackeray, involves diversions from unpleasant truths regarding reality, the statement also applies to the way in which individuals live straight lies.

To be thoroughly honest, one must tell the truth of one's body and soul, yet, as expected, this feat is easier in word than it is in deed.

For the family desiring a perfectly heterosexual child, deviance from heteronormativity or cisnormativity is an unpleasant truth, but, for the sake of the child's happiness, such a truth must be understood. Closeted, LGBT people hide their innermost selves in fear of how other people will perceive and treat them.

For students, moving away to universities often provides the much needed opportunity through which to explore their sexual desires and experiment with the presentations of their gendered selves. Many students find that liberation begins when one possesses the room to be oneself. A need among students, particularly among LGBT students, is the need to be understood.

In "Preservation of Innocence," James Baldwin writes, "Experience, nevertheless, to say nothing of history, seems clearly to indicate that it is not possible to banish or to falsify any human need without

ourselves undergoing falsification." Denying oneself the treasure of understanding other human beings results in a falsification of the self and of the other in which nobody finds liberation. Living beneath the shroud of falsified heterosexuality produces tension within the mind of the LGBT person which contributes to both depression and suicide, inflicting harm upon the individual in body and soul.

Compulsory heterosexuality creates unhappy lives, publicly and privately, which explains why LGBT college students find such liberation being away from the sort of home environments where their families consistently restrict their freedom to exist openly as their true selves. Emerging into the world as one's true self often involves changes in relationships with family and friends. Not all human beings desire happiness for their fellow beings, a simple and sad fact, but it is unjust for them

to desire the repression of another person, especially their LGBT family member or friend, at the expense of that LGBT person's happiness. Whether young or old, from different backgrounds, LGBT people express the importance of coming out, even when one exposes oneself to an unwelcoming world. Happiness begins with radical openness about oneself.

Flattering others and earnestly desiring to appeal to tradition and prejudice both produce a useful mask of pleasantness, although, at some point, the mask begins to grow tiresome. Living in the closet long enough may lead to complacency in secrecy and safety.

On the other hand, claustrophobia in the confined and dark space may spark the revolutionary fire required for escaping the prison of repression. After all, coming out to the world is really coming into oneself, freeing one's voice to speak one's truth. In A Room of

One's Own, Woolf writes: "Let us admit in the privacy of our own society that these things sometimes happen. Sometimes women do like women."

Suppose that individuals no longer must limit the expression of their true selves to places of privacy and obscurity. Sometimes women do like women just as sometimes men do like men, but imagine if those people could live as themselves, existing visibly in a world which prefers truth over falsehood. For perhaps the first time, silence transforms into language which, with growing courage, leads to action. When all men and women learn to love and embrace themselves and other people, they will be free to live and love as they please, drinking in the fullness of their relationships with all of humankind.

College Night

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JUDGE 1 GOLD SHOW

Tech issues obscured much of what audience cheering and screaming and applause didn't. Obviously, the game-like atmosphere's integral to and a tradition for College Night, but each side's supporters should bear in mind that, by drowning out singers and actors at peak moments, muddying punch lines and melodies, they're actually weakening their show's performance.

Audiences/judges can only go by what they've seen and heard, so moments blurred in the muddle create a drag on the overall intent. Character's names, motivations, occupations, attitudes ... all lost in the noise, so that what rises above are only the broad outlines of a parody. Parody, like most comedy, is in the details. Without fine edges, it's a watercolor cartoon.

Both shows suffered from sound issues, but they were especially rough on the first performance of Saturday evening, "All in the Swing: A Golden Musical." And that's a shame, because as a riff on cornpone musicals such as "Oklahoma," with a bit of mustache-twirling villainy ripped from silent films, "All in the Swing" maintained consistent energy and amusement levels throughout, and might have been even smarter, had its script and lyrics been clearer. For the future, it'd be interesting to see if the kids could work with an off-stage band, so as to better blend the sound.

Not enough was available, via script or costume, to clearly distinguish between one toothless miner and another, so the script was left with a lot of water to carry. A couple of the leads stood out via clearer diction -- and mics that mostly worked -- though some motivations and plot points were lost early in that white-noise

COLLEGE NIGHT SCORES & COMMENTS



issue. With that much crowd-noise factor to work with, actor/performers have got to ride the wave, wait out the crest of the applause, and surf down as it descends.

The group dance scenes lifted it to another plane, with high energy and clear joy evident. Gold made terrific use of the handful with more dance training and experience, while giving the others moves within their abilities. The precision of these [group dance scenes] paid off the long hours of rehearsal.

In non-musical scenes, though, groups tended to clutter, so take a cue from the choreographers and spread the space. Find dimensions and levels, and make them come alive. That's especially important playing with sets that are mostly painted backdrops. (By the way, the Mel Brooksian comedy around the mercantile could use refinement: More General Store is an OK gag, but the leap from there to the bloody issue of conflict diamonds doesn't work in the show's favor).

Sympathy for the characters might have gone a long way, in that aside from characteristics, as ably embodied by charming performers, there wasn't much to go on: Who is this couple? Why are they here? Why's this guy in league with that guy, aside from Pinky and the Brain motives?

Melodically and lyrically, it was impressive, a lot of strong work for the singers to enjoy, and tipped toward the ecstatic by the high-stepping dance. But as with the rest of the script, what could have helped musically was more variation in character and pace, changes in tempo and energy.

Add in a touch of heartbreak, a little romance or pathos, which would necessitate honest feeling for the characters -- it often felt as though the writers had little other than toothless contempt for its gold-rushers -- and this show could fly.

JUDGE 2 GOLD SHOW

Kicking off College Night, the Gold team presented "All in the Swing: A Golden Musical," written by Alex Belli, Ryan Howard, Justice Allen and Gray Lackey, and directed by Emily Gabhart and Gray Lacky. It tells a story about life in an old west town on the brink of foreclosure from a ruthless financier who dupes a dim-witted store clerk into selling the townsfolk "used" tools so they would break while mining, slowing the mining process and causing them to need to buy tools again, stirring a vicious cycle and accelerating the foreclosure process. By the end, I got that much. I have to be honest though, I was having trouble understanding what was going on and why most of the show. I completely understand that there were significant sound issues, often making it difficult to hear, however plays have been performed for centuries, long before microphones were invented. While it is my understanding that many of the participants are not necessarily trained in any type of vocal technique, there is still far more that can be done, by both the performers, and even by the team's audience, to tell the story.

One of the best things about this show was the dancing. Many big production numbers, with cleanly executed, high-energy choreography by Jared Max Wright and Savannah Willard, really helped to sell the sense of community that the townspeople had with each other. The scenery was appropriate, and helped us get a sense

of where we were from scene to scene. While the scene changes were a little long and clunky, the breaks benefited from a female frontier version of Statler and Waldorf, who narrated the transitions and cracked pun-filled jokes to pass the time.

The highlight of the evening, however, was the aforementioned store clerk, Samuel Bennet, played by Jared Max Wright. He is a real triple threat, and I anticipate seeing more of him as his career progresses.

What got lost along the way was one of the primary characters, Jessie "Jackpot" Jenkins, played by Ashley Woodson, who comes to town from relatively nowhere, and does not seem to have much reason to be there. Towards the end, she inspires the town folk in mining just enough to save their town from foreclosure when all hope seemed to be lost. Maybe it was lost in the dialogue with all the sound issues, but why the tightly knit townspeople needed motivation from a stranger who had only recently arrived to town was beyond me. This is no knock on Woodson, who played and sang the role well, Jessie just seemed to be an unnecessary character.

Before the night was over, however, the plot of the show played out in the evening, and the Gold team overcame a very clever and scrappy Purple show to pull out the win. Congrats to both sides on a fun evening.



PURPLE SHOW

"Code Purple: A Top Secret Musical" zipped along avidly from its opening backlit dance-through, a tableaux suggesting Cirque du 007, to a satisfactorily achieved finale.

Spy parodies have been around almost as long as spy stories, dating back a half century at least, but spy-musical parodies are less-tried, being as spy musicals aren't yet a genre. So in novelty alone, it stood out.

"Code Purple" leans on character, almost always the right choice, as without having someone to root for (or against), there's no attachment. Zachary Tarwater's Agent Valentine begged [for] and won sympathy with the sweet "Undercover Me," built around a simple, effective pun on layers of humanity beneath the trench coat, with an infectious melody right in the singer's range.

Decent build-up from comedic/musical-comedy types, in part due to the self-aware but warm script, and part due to well-cast leads, with Amber Hayes vividly defining Director Hart, and Robin Stevens slicing through the goof as nonsense-free Agent Percy, Type A foil to Valentine's decent bumbler.

On the bad-guy side, Goldman and EyePatch – silly, but no worse than some Bond monikers; workable, with meta-references enabled -- pulled off some distinctive work, even if, as with the sound issues mentioned earlier, some dialogue/jokes/lines got buried under crowds reacting in anticipation. Maybe don't let repeat viewers in, on Saturday night? A hard choice for this event, but worth considering, so audiences can feel the full impact.

After the backlit opening, the drops and props showed a comfortable grasp of the

geography of the playing space. The "Café Dance" scene cleverly used set pieces to create distinct location feel, as did the mad scientist's lab. Kudos to the lighting crew and designers for crafting strong, direct choices.

Some of the campier performances flew over the top fast. It felt as if some of that was again, in reaction to the crowd, knowing the audiences expected louder, faster, funnier, a build from previous performances. Trust the material. Don't push. Let the audience meet you.

Pleasing understanding of theater as three-dimensional, breathing work, including the often-dreaded, but here smartly done, actors-running-into-the-audience shtick. With house-lights down and flashlights up, that bit covered scene changes well, helped keep the pace brisk.

Building toward larger musical numbers was a smart plan: Introduce individuals first, then go for the high-stepping crowd-pleasers. Tempo and mood shifts, a sense of swagger, in "The Fight Must Be Won" and "Let's Break it Down" felt fresh and welcome. Smart use of the reprises, with two of the stronger compositions of the night.

But the group dances needed work. "Puppeteer" began strong, a fun idea that weakened and waned as it stretched on. It's a major issue with splashy musical numbers: You don't necessarily need pro dancers, but you do have to get everyone on the same steps. And again, as with the other show: wait out laughs or other crowd reactions. Comedy often depends on build, and you can't build on white noise.

Even through its flaws, this show kept me grinning. Care and wit was evident in its creation and execution.

PURPLE SHOW

Rounding out the evening was the Purple team with a very clever spy thriller entitled "Code Purple: A Top Secret Musical," written by Aaron Coleman and directed by Dakota Patrick. The very first notes from the orchestra, led by Jonathan Mendoza and Tori Irvin, gave us a sense of where we were going with their show. Simple silhouette moments during the overture also helped to set the tone.

The play centered on a goofy CIA agent, Agent Valentine, played nicely by Zachary Tarwater, who we quickly learn is only in that position because his mother is the Director of the CIA. Despite his constant blunders, he convinces her to put him on a case, to which he quickly gets distracted and bungles. By the end, though, the agent that cannot get anything right ends up being the one to save the day, in large part aided by the personal quirks that so often hinder him.

The play really benefited from strong leading actors, namely Tarwater and the villain, Goldman, played by Blake-Anthon Lovelace, who seemed completely comfortable on stage and really relished his time in the spotlight. Speaking of spotlight, I really have to congratulate the Lighting Designer, Ricky Umstead, who took a very messy repertory plot and made the most of it with some resourceful color choices and creative effects. From one lighting guy to another, well done. I was also impressed with the various scenic elements. They had a nice variety of locations

that were cohesive and complementary.

While there were many effective elements used to tell this story, there were also a few that hindered it. One was the incredibly beleaguered scene changes. While there were many pieces that had to change out, there also seemed to be adequate stagehands to do it in a timely manner. Instead, things moved incredibly slowly with nothing else to cover it. You can only run up and down the aisles so many times before that trick gets old. The dancing was decent and choreographed suitably, but often not as clean as it could be.

I would also like to touch on timing and delivery just a bit. I really love the energy and enthusiasm that an event like College Night brings. If you are not careful, though, it can be a deterrent to your performance. This is a note for both teams, but especially the Purple team this year. If you are in the audience, be careful not to cheer over the dialogue. While you may have heard this joke three times and it gets better every time, let the actors make the joke so the rest of us can hear it. Likewise, if you are on stage and the audience is applauding your efforts, wait for that to die down before continuing. That way we do not lose what could be important plot points.

Overall, it was quite an enjoyable night of theatre. College Night is such a unique tradition that has been a staple of the Montevallo campus for nearly 100 years. Both teams should be incredibly proud of their efforts in making such this year's event remarkable.



Scores

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JUDGE 3

GOLD SHOW

"All in the Swing: A Golden Musical" was an entertaining experience and fantastic introduction to the COLLEGE NIGHT tradition about which I have heard so much. There is an obvious collaboration required to bring such an effort to fruition and THE GOLDS successfully utilized all theatrical components in order to guide the audience through the fully realized world of the show. Unfortunately, due to sound problems and lack of articulation by certain cast members, I missed some of the exposition necessary to thoroughly follow the plot. These complications also resulted in my missing some of the jokes which were peppered throughout a script full of both over-the-top and subtle humor. The energy onstage was so palpable, however, that I quickly found myself forgetting these issues and became fully immersed in the story.

Directors, Gray Lackey and Emily Gabhart, responsible for maintaining and reinforcing an overall vision of the show, obviously calibrated all elements of the production while maintaining the intention and integrity of all artistic and technical elements. This dynamic directing team created engaging stage pictures, blocking with proper focus, and instilled a pace that kept the show alive and moving. Impressively quick transitions between scenes also contributed to the dynamic energy that was prevalent throughout.

Choreographers, Jared Max Wright and Savannah Willard used various dance styles in order to enhance "All in the Swing: A Golden Musical." As a choreographer myself, I can truly appreciate the time and energy that went into making the choreography.

clean, interesting, appropriate, and attainable for all ability levels. The dances were executed by a spirited group of performers who were fully committed from beginning to end.

The show was a true vehicle for ensemble work and both the directors and choreographers were successful in highlighting each performer's strengths. In addition, the composers and lyricists provided a variety of songs which were used to drive the plot forward, highlight characterization, establish relationships, and/or get the audience clapping along. Although I found a few songs to be written in a key too high for certain female singers which prohibited us from hearing or understanding lyrics, the tunes were catchy, humorous, and quite clever. These songs were accompanied by an adept orchestra, led by conductors Mary Light and Tyler Jones, who played the material well despite sometimes being overpowered by the cast.

The scenery, props, and costumes were all well-executed and highly suitable to the cartoon-like nature of the show. The lighting design seemed dark overall but perhaps this could be attributed to the light plot available and not the design itself.

Everyone who contributed to "All in the Swing: A Golden Musical" should be commended on successfully creating an imaginary world through careful interpretation and expression of a strong text combined with the visual communication of the world of the script through performance, design, direction, and choreography.

Choreographers, Jared Max Wright and Savannah Willard used various dance styles in order to enhance "All in the Swing: A Golden Musical." As a choreographer myself, I can truly appreciate the time and energy that went into making the choreography.

PURPLE SHOW

"Code Purple: A Top Secret Musical" began with a strong opening montage, full of fun choreography and a lighting design that immediately peaked my interest and provided insight into the journey upon which we were about to embark. Unfortunately, due to various factors such as sound issues, audience reactions, and lack of articulation and/or volume by some actors, I had trouble following the arch of the story throughout its duration. Despite moments of weak vocal energy, both speaking and singing, the cast maintained full commitment throughout the entire show which made up for any small imperfections.

Actor Zachary Tarwater, as Agent Valentine, was a particular standout who balanced his humor with moments of honest sincerity, specifically in the song "Undercover Me" which is better than some songs in current Broadway repertoire. Kudos to the lyricists and composers for crafting such lovely tunes and to conductor, Jonathan Mendoza, and his orchestra who sounded "tight" while blending well with the cast.

Director, Dakota Patrick, made a valiant effort in tackling this huge undertaking but basic principles of effective blocking such as composition, movement, and focus weren't always successfully executed in terms of clear connection to storytelling. Unbalanced blocking, actors upstaging themselves, or unneces-

sary "gags", for example, impeded focus on important action and/or moments. And although the script also neglected to sometimes clearly define characters and situations, it was clever and replete with good messages, songs, and characters.

Choreographer, Claire Quirk and assistant, Madison Johnson, took on the very challenging task of creating a movement text to complement the script and score. Like the rest of the show, the choreography was fun and a bit "over-the-top," performed full out by a talented ensemble. In my opinion, however, so many "tricks" weren't needed in order to enhance the style of the show or further the plot.

Transitions in and out of scenes slowed down the pace of this otherwise tireless production as they were a bit disjointed and slower than I would have preferred. Perhaps the various settings needed for this show set in Washington D.C. in the 1980s could have been more easily represented with a more simplistic set design. Furthermore, long introductions into songs, where actors seemed to be waiting to sing, also impeded the flow of the narrative.

Creative and original costumes, props, hair, and makeup were all vital to the theme of the show and relevant to the setting. The lighting design seemed dark overall, but I suspect this has to do with the actual lighting plot available to the designer.



GOLD SIDE SCORES

	JUDGE 1	JUDGE 2	JUDGE 3	POINTS POSSIBLE
SCRIPT	6/10	7/10	7/10	20/30
LYRICS	7/10	5/10	8/10	20/30
SCORE	7/10	7/10	8/10	22/30
DIRECTION	6/10	8/10	8/10	22/30
CHOREOGRAPHY	8/10	7/10	10/10	25/30
ACTING	6/10	4/10	7/10	17/30
SINGING	8/10	6/10	7/10	21/30
DANCING	9/10	8/10	9/10	26/30
ORCHESTRA	6/10	8/10	8/10	22/30
COSTUMES	7/10	7/10	10/10	24/30
SET	7/10	6/10	9/10	22/30
HAIR & MAKEUP	7/10	4/10	10/10	21/30
PROPS	3/5	4/5	5/5	12/15
LIGHTING DESIGN	4/5	2/5	3/5	9/15
RUNNING	8/10	7/10	9/10	24/30
OVERALL EFFECT	12/15	11/15	12/15	35/45
PRODUCTION SUBTOTAL	111	101	130	342/470
PREPRODUCTION SUBTOTAL				146/166
TOTAL POINTS				488/636



PURPLE SIDE SCORES

	JUDGE 1	JUDGE 2	JUDGE 3	POINTS POSSIBLE
SCRIPT	9/10	8/10	5/10	22/30
LYRICS	10/10	6/10	6/10	22/30
SCORE	9/10	6/10	7/10	22/30
DIRECTION	10/10	7/10	5/10	22/30
CHOREOGRAPHY	8/10	7/10	5/10	20/30
ACTING	10/10	6/10	5/10	21/30
SINGING	9/10	7/10	5/10	21/30
DANCING	9/10	7/10	5/10	21/30
ORCHESTRA	8/10	7/10	5/10	20/30
COSTUMES	8/10	7/10	5/10	20/30
SET	9/10	8/10	5/10	22/30
HAIR & MAKEUP	9/10	7/10	8/10	24/30
PROPS	5/5	3/5	4/5	12/15
LIGHTING DESIGN	5/5	4/5	3/5	12/15
RUNNING	8/10	5/10	5/10	18/30
OVERALL EFFECT	14/15	12/15	8/15	34/45
PRODUCTION SUBTOTAL	140	107	86	333/470
PREPRODUCTION SUBTOTAL				122.5/166
TOTAL POINTS				455.5/636